

WESTMINSTER COURT OF SEWERS.

At a court, held on Friday, the 5th inst., Mr. Leslie in the chair, the collectors presented their accounts, and the clerk reported, that of the gross amount of the rates on the various districts, £46,617 13s. 3d., the sum of 39,116 7s. 9d. had been collected, and there were 7,501 1s. 6d. uncollected. The clerk further reported the treasurer's account, from which it appeared, that there were in the banker's hands a cash balance of 13,373 18s. 8d. —Orders on the bankers were signed for 372 14s. 1d.

Sixty petitions were then presented to the court, for 8,453 feet of new sewers, at the expense of the various applicants, and 461 new house drains.

Fifteen tenders were presented to the court for the supply of 500 gully grates. Messrs. Cottam and Hallen's was declared the lowest, and their tender was accepted. Tenders for 30,000 railated bricks were then received. Messrs. Ratty and Verey were the successful competitors. A further order for an additional 150,000 was given, subject to the sanction of the next court, at the same price, 40s. per thousand delivered.

Thomas Rowe was elected fourth clerk of the works, *nem. con.*

In consequence of the great increase of business, the clerk and surveyor were ordered to look out for a person well qualified to discharge the duties of a builder's clerk, at a salary of 2l. per week, and report to the next court.

•• The largeness of the amount belonging to the commission, constantly reported as being in the banker's hands, excites the surprise of some of our readers. We will inquire into it.

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

THE project of transforming the Regent's Canal into a railway has become void in consequence of the required amount not having been subscribed; so that the 5,000l. deposited as caution money by the committee of the proposed scheme has become the property of the Regent Canal Company. —The Eastern Union line, which was opened on Tuesday week, for the conveyance of goods, cattle, and parcels, will be opened on the 15th for passengers. General Pasley inspected the whole line on the 4th inst. The most noticeable works appear to be the bridge erected over the deepest part of the cut, near Brantham, and consisting of five arches of 30 feet span each; and the embankment crossing the two tidal and navigable forks or branches of the Stour upon wooden viaducts, intercepting a piece of land, where the formation of a wharf and dock has been suggested. The completion of this line is exciting much interest in Suffolk, and the Ipswich people take great credit to themselves for their exertions in securing its formation. The fares between London and Ipswich are to be 15s., 10s., and 5s. 8d. —The London and Birmingham Grand Junction, Midland, and Northern Railway Companies, have made arrangements for the conveyance of newspapers at a charge one-half that for parcels, provided the charge for a single package be not less than one shilling. The London and Birmingham Company require that the packages shall contain "newspapers only," and that they shall have authority to open and examine them whenever they have reason to believe that this regulation is infringed. —Excavations have been made for the Lincoln railway station, which is to have a Grecian portico. The contract is for 21,700l. —The line of electric telegraph between the metropolis and Leeds will be completed in the course of the summer, when seven minutes will suffice to convey intelligence between the two. Even at present the communication reaches to the Midland station at Nottingham, and the late division in the House of Lords was announced at Leeds about nine in the morning. —The South Devon line from Exeter to Teignmouth was opened on the 30th of May. It is a single line of broad gauge, intended to be worked on the atmospheric principle but opened in the meantime for the convenience of the district as a locomotive line. Twenty miles of pipe are on the ground, but the stationary engines are not ready. The line commences at the Exeter terminus of the

Bristol and Exeter Railway. The Exe is crossed by a pile bridge, and the line is carried over a street upon arches. At Dawlish, it is carried over a viaduct of granite under which is access to the beach. There are five short tunnels between Dawlish and Teignmouth, the intervals being protected by double sea-walls. At Star Cross the line passes quite through the water. The electric telegraph is completed to Teignmouth. —The railway speculators at Exeter are said to have pledged themselves to schemes amounting to 11,000,000l.

—On the 4th inst., Lord Redesdale presented petitions to Parliament from about 5,000 railway passengers, one of them signed by sixty-nine ladies, complaining of the inconvenience occasioned by the break of gauge.

—By a Parliamentary return printed on the 4th instant, it appears that out of 588 private bills applied for during the present session, for which a subscription contract has been deposited in the Private Bill-office, 514 were railway projects. There is a very good summary to this return, from which it seems that the estimated expense of the 588 undertakings is 265,842,366l. The capital stock is stated at 258,970,860l. and the money authorized to be borrowed 94,270,561l. The expense of the various railways, out of the sum set forth is 259,329,450l.; the capital stock, 254,050,760l.; and the money authorized to be borrowed 90,472,095l. —"Of the 530 bills before Parliament at the beginning of the session," says the *Railway Chronicle*, "370 have, up to Whit-suntide, been finally disposed of, leaving 160 still before the Committee."

Summary of Bills granted.

	Miles in length.	Capital.
106 for England..	2,384	£59,411,462
62 for Scotland..	853	£14,983,110
42 for Ireland...	970	£12,063,000
210 Grand totals..	4,172	£86,457,572

Of the above 210 there are—

New, or Independent Companies	61
London and Birmingham (Branches, Extensions, &c.)	5
Grand Junction	8
Great Western (broad gauge)	10
Midland and York and North Midland	20
Eastern Counties	4
Manchester and Leeds	5
South Eastern	7
South Western	5
Brighton and Croydon Companies	6
Caledonian	15
Edinburgh and Glasgow	19
Glasgow and Ayr	6
North British	4
Edinburgh and Northern	8
Aberdeen	2
Eastern Union	3
Norfolk	2
Great Grimsby and Sheffield	5
Ipswich and Bury St. Edmunds	1
Great Southern and Western of Ireland	8
Midland Great Western of Ireland	2
Cork and Brandon	1
Belfast and Ballymena	2
Dublin and Kingstown	1

210

Earl Fitzwilliam, in the House of Lords, on the 5th inst., moved an order to the effect that the third reading of no more railway bills be agreed to, until the whole of the bills now under the consideration of Parliament be brought up. As his reason for introducing the resolutions in question, his Lordship alleged the ill success of the Government plan for winding up the affairs of the railway companies. The Earl of Dalhousie, Lord Kinnaird, and the Duke of Wellington objected to the resolutions, as the working of the Government measure had not been sufficiently tested; but all admitted that some modification of the standing-orders, with the view to repress railway speculation, was absolutely necessary. The resolutions, however, were finally withdrawn. —The House of Lords (select committee on bills) have unanimously decided in favour of the London and York line.

WATERLOO BRIDGE.—At the half-yearly meeting of proprietors held last week, the disbursements were shown to be equal to the receipts, and, of course, no dividend was declared. The bridge has not been purchased by any railway company.

COURTS IN LIVERPOOL.

It would be very desirable to consider whether, in our circumstances, it would not be better to abolish courts altogether, and to take down as many houses as might be needful to convert them into short streets, opening at both ends into wider streets. There are besides, moral objections to courts, which we do not think have been sufficiently considered. A small court is a separate community, and its inmates must have a certain influence either for good or evil upon each other. The bad example of one family must necessarily influence others; and respectable people are obliged to consort with those whom they cannot esteem, but whom they cannot avoid. And when we consider how large a proportion of the female sex, industrious mothers of families, are condemned to spend their whole lives immured between the blackened walls of those narrow and pestilential localities, never, perhaps, seeing the sun shine into their houses, and knowing nothing in the wide universe but its miseries, it is enough to make the heart sick. And what must the reality be? Let our readers, especially our female readers, try to realise this. Let them consider at the same time, that these poor women are not only cut off from every intercourse with objects of natural beauty, but that they very generally spend their short lives in ill health, with their children sickly and dying around them; and all this because building land is valuable, and cannot be sacrificed. It certainly is valuable, for human sickness, and sorrow, and death, are counted light in comparison, while all the moral evil produced in the living, is equally disregarded. How many a respectable woman, by reason of familiarity with such scenes, has passed through all the downward phases of filth, bad habits, and drunkenness, to confirmed vice! The fact is notorious; and indeed it could not be otherwise, constituted as human nature is. We would for these reasons abolish courts, unless they were differently constructed from any we have in this town.—*Health of Town Advocate.*

SELF-SUPPORTING VILLAGE SOCIETY.

On Wednesday week, the first meeting of the members and friends of this society, established in connection with the Church of England, was held in Exeter Hall. The Hon. W. Cooper, M.P., presided, and was supported by the Lord Bishop of Norwich, Lord John Manners, M.P., &c.

The first resolution, which affirmed the necessity of making some provision for the labouring classes, having in view their temporal and spiritual interests, was moved by the Lord Bishop of Norwich. The undertaking, his Lordship thought, was a feasible one. It was mentioned to him in the first instance, by Mr. Morgan, the projector, and he was deterred from connecting himself with it in consequence of the similarity which he thought it bore to the plan adopted by Mr. Robert Owen, the socialist, in Hampshire; but he became convinced of his error, and was now persuaded that the scheme was eminently calculated to serve the interests of those for whom it was designed. Mr. Morgan's calculation was, that 45,000l. would be required, in order to build and furnish cottages for 300 families, with church, workshops, infirmary, &c., and that 15,000l. would suffice to purchase 1,000 acres of land. The village would be under the direction of a committee. The returns would yield 2½ to 3 per cent.

Lord John Manners, M.P., in seconding the resolution, made reference to Frederickston, in Holland, formerly an entire morass, but reclaimed through the combined exertions of a class of labourers placed there to try the experiment. He also cited a case of a similar character in Flintshire.

The resolution having been adopted, Mr. Morgan and several other gentlemen addressed the meeting, and subscribers to the new society were enrolled.

COMMENCEMENT OF NEW BUILDINGS.—If architects will not take the trouble to inform us when "first stones" are to be laid, they ought not afterwards to complain of our omitting to mention the ceremony.